

A black and white photograph of a woman wearing a white hard hat and a dark work jacket, holding a large blueprint. She is standing in a field of tall grass, looking towards the right. In the background, several wind turbines are visible against a dark sky.

JOBS TODAY, JOBS TOMORROW:

The Liberal Plan for a More Prosperous Canada

“A Liberal government will create jobs now and put Canada’s economy on a solid footing for our children. We will make targeted investments in Canada’s infrastructure, and boost our investments in post-secondary education and research and development.”

The Liberal green shift plan described in the previous chapter will strengthen our economy by spurring investment and creating a new generation of green-collar jobs in energy, construction, design, and consumer products. And by cutting the lowest income tax rate by 10 percent and middle-class taxes by four to five percent, we'll make sure that every Canadian keeps more of their pay-cheque. The Liberal green shift will also boost the competitiveness of Canada's economy through business tax relief that will stimulate investment and green innovations. The general corporate income tax rate will be cut by an additional one percent. To assist small businesses, the engine of the Canadian economy, we will also cut the small business corporate tax rate by an additional one percent. Over \$1.7 billion will be set aside for accelerated capital cost allowance rates to encourage investments in green technologies and equipment and the Science, Research & Experimental Development Tax credit will be made partially refundable to ensure that all companies have an incentive to invest in the kind of R&D that Canada will need to compete in the green economy of the 21st century.

But that's just the beginning of our plan to build a more prosperous Canada. A Liberal government will create jobs now and put Canada's economy on a solid footing for our children. We will make targeted investments in Canada's infrastructure, and boost our investments in post-secondary education and research and development.

All of these investments will be made within the framework of fiscal discipline that has become our hallmark as Liberals.

1. A Strong Climate for Growth: Balanced Budgets

Canada is comparatively well-equipped to face the challenge of an aging population. And this is because we will pass the next generation a burden of debt much lighter than the one we inherited. Thanks to Canadians' hard work and the leadership of the former Liberal government, our country's finances were put on the right path to decrease our debt burden relative to the size of our wealth.

Not long ago, Canada's public debt was one of the highest in the developed world. Now, it's one of the lowest. We are also the only country to put our national pension plan on a sound footing – thanks to the previous Liberal government and the hard work and sacrifice of all Canadians.

A new Liberal government will continue this sound management, the core of which is fiscal discipline. We are committed to balanced budgets, which is why all the commitments in this platform are within a prudent fiscal framework that includes a contingency reserve of \$3 billion a year to be applied to the debt if it's not used – a prudent measure irresponsibly abandoned by the Conservative government.

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Fiscal discipline is now part of the Liberal DNA. We were the party that turned a huge deficit into eight years of surpluses, and we will continue to put fiscal responsibility first.

There is also a need to consider the larger picture. And this picture includes a large infrastructure deficit that, if our generation fails to act, will be passed onto our children.

2. Jobs Today: Tackling the Infrastructure Deficit in our Cities and Communities

Together with Canadians, Liberals defeated the fiscal deficit. Canada is now facing another challenge, one that could be just as debilitating to our country's potential: the infrastructure deficit. The "infrastructure deficit" means that amount of spending needed simply to bring our existing infrastructure up to acceptable modern standards, without even adding anything new. This infrastructure deficit, estimated at over \$100 billion, threatens our economic growth and our quality of life.

Liberals understand that infrastructure is not only the backbone of the Canadian economy; it is the foundation for the cities and communities in which we live. It is our tap water, the roads and bridges that connect us, the buildings that form the faces of our communities. Climate change will add to the challenge, as extreme weather places further stress on our infrastructure.

To tackle the infrastructure deficit, all governments must work together in partnership – and there must be leadership from the federal government. Stéphane Dion is committed to providing long-term, predictable resources through a three-point infrastructure revitalization plan.

A Liberal government would implement a 10-year, \$70-billion plan to invest in our country's infrastructure.

First, a Liberal government will implement a 10-year, \$70-billion plan to invest directly in our country's infrastructure. As part of this commitment, we will honour all existing framework agreements that the Conservative government has signed with the provinces. We believe that when the Government of Canada puts its name on an agreement, future governments should respect that commitment – a principle that has been violated by the Harper Conservatives who ignored signed commitments on the Atlantic Accords, the Kelowna Accord and the agreements with the provinces on early learning and child care. All specific funding commitments will also be honoured.

We will allocate at least \$10 billion for Strategic Infrastructure, particularly green infrastructure such as clean water and sewage treatment, and clean energy grids.

Rather than the unfocused and incoherent approach to infrastructure that we have seen from the Conservatives, a Liberal government will be upfront and transparent about the priorities we will pursue in our discussions with the provinces and municipalities under the framework agreements. To that end, over the next 10 years, a Liberal government will allocate:

- at least \$10 billion for Strategic Infrastructure, particularly green infrastructure such as clean water and sewage treatment, and clean energy grids;
- at least \$8 billion for a National Transit Strategy that will enable our cities to expand their systems and green their transit fleets;
- at least \$3 billion for a dedicated Small Communities Fund, to ensure that all Canadians are able to see strengthened, more resilient infrastructure;
- at least \$4.5 billion for our country's Gateways, Corridors and Borders to ensure that Canada's infrastructure facilitates, rather than hinders, our trade and tourism industries while keeping Canada safe and secure; and
- at least \$3 billion for Sports and Recreational Facilities because an active society is a healthier society and Canada must renew and expand its arenas and other leisure facilities.

In addition to these clear priorities, our 10-year plan includes the transfer of almost \$25 billion to the municipalities through the gas tax transfer. We will index the transfer to nominal GDP growth so that municipalities have the funding certainty they need to keep up with economic growth.

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Second, a new Liberal government will invest the entire amount of any future unanticipated surplus that exceeds our \$3-billion contingency reserve into Canada's infrastructure. This would have represented \$7 billion in 2007-08, and nearly \$75 billion if this approach had been taken over the last ten years. The top priority will be investment in sustainable infrastructure: public transit, water systems, green energy, waste management and remediating contaminated sites.

Third, a Liberal government will develop an Infrastructure Bank as an additional tool to finance infrastructure investment. This bank will provide low-cost financing for all levels of government that choose to borrow from it and will help finance long-term green infrastructure projects such as regional energy grids and high speed rail links in Canada's busiest commuter corridors. Canadians across the country would have the opportunity to participate in the Bank's projects through the purchase of tax-free Green Bonds similar to Canada Savings Bonds.

A Liberal government would develop an Infrastructure Bank as an additional tool to finance infrastructure investment.

Our commitment to addressing Canada's infrastructure deficit is strong. Our plan will be good for Canadians now – as it will create jobs and stimulate businesses at a time of economic slowdown – but it is also a commitment for the long term. For example, a Liberal government will be a willing partner for mega-projects like an East-West grid, commit to an Atlantic Energy Corridor and a carbon capture and sequestration pipeline between Alberta and Saskatchewan. The economic opportunities from infrastructure investments such as these are enormous and a Liberal government will seize them.

Infrastructure

The Liberal infrastructure commitment is worth \$70 billion over ten years, with additional funding from future unanticipated surpluses and the resources of the infrastructure bank. The table below outlines four and ten year totals for infrastructure spending.

Over the next four years, we will not spend any less than the current commitments of the federal government. With our commitment regarding unanticipated surpluses, we will likely invest more.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS	INFRASTRUCTURE (\$B)	
	4 Year Total 2009/10 to 2012/13	10 Year Total 2009/10 to 2018/19
Pacific Gateway and Corridors	0.6	0.6
Gateways and Borders	1.4	4.7
Strategic Infrastructure	2.4	10.3
National Transit	1.9	8.2
Small Communities	0.6	2.8
Recreational	0.7	3.1
\$25 m per province per year	1.3	3.3
Phase-out of existing programs	1.3	1.3
Infrastructure Bank Financing cost	0.3	1.6
GST rebate	3.4	9.6
Gas Tax Transfer to municipalities	8.6	24.6
TOTAL	22.4	70.0

3. Jobs Today: The Advanced Manufacturing Prosperity Fund

Liberals know that some of our most important industries are facing unprecedented challenges. Unlike the Harper Conservatives, who have turned their backs on Canadian manufacturing, we will be there to help with strategic investments to create new jobs and growth.

We will create a \$1-billion Advanced Manufacturing Prosperity (AMP) Fund. The fund will support investments in manufacturing and R&D facilities.

We will create a \$1-billion Advanced Manufacturing Prosperity (AMP) Fund to help this key sector, which lost 130,000 jobs in 2007 under the Harper Conservatives. The AMP Fund will help make Canada a leader in green technologies. It will support major investments in manufacturing and R&D facilities, which will serve as an anchor for clusters of economic activity. We will make investments according to following three strategic criteria:

1. The federal investment must leverage significant private investment, and in so doing create jobs.

2. The investment must be in anchor facilities that attract significant secondary industries: suppliers, services, and other support businesses.
3. The investment must help position Canada as a leader in the manufacture of greener technologies and products.

Contrary to Conservatives, Liberals believe in partnering with the provinces to make targeted investments to help spur innovation and create jobs. As other countries like the United States are investing strategically to attract new private investment in order to bring the best jobs and the best facilities to their country, the Conservatives have done nothing. Every day we follow the Harper Conservative approach means lost opportunities for Canada and lost jobs for Canadians.

4. Strong Rural and Northern Canada

No economic plan for Canada would be complete without specific policies for rural and Northern Canada. The Liberal green shift plan and incentives for renewable power will encourage new investments in renewable energy throughout rural Canada, from bio-fuels to wind to solar power. In addition to all other income tax reductions in the Liberal plan, rural Canadians will receive an additional \$150 per tax filer every year.

A Liberal government will complete the job of making broadband internet service available to rural communities and keep rural post offices open.

But our plan does much more. We will focus much of our infrastructure effort on rural Canada. That doesn't just mean roads and bridges – it's also about communications. That's why a Liberal government will:

- complete the job of making broadband Internet service available to rural communities; and
- keep rural post offices open, recommitting to the Liberal moratorium on closing rural post offices.

Canada cannot be truly prosperous if some regions are left behind as others flourish. For the past generation, Canada's regional development agencies – the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CEDQ), Western Economic Diversification Canada (WED) and the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Ontario (FedNor) – have worked to foster economic development in small rural and urban communities across Canada. Stephen Harper's Conservatives have never understood the valuable work undertaken by Canada's regional development agencies, viewing them as little more than regional welfare agencies. Therefore it is no surprise that they have downgraded the representation of the agencies in their Conservative cabinet and in some cases cut their funding. A Liberal government would reverse this trend and restore funding, including the \$6.4 million cut from the Northern Ontario Development Program, which promotes economic growth, diversification, job creation and sustainable communities in Northern Ontario.

A Liberal government will help rural communities attract more doctors by forgiving \$10,000 of student debt in exchange for each year of practice in a rural or under-serviced area.

A high quality of life in rural Canada means having access to high quality services. That's why a Liberal government will:

- help rural communities attract more doctors by forgiving \$10,000 of student debt for doctors in exchange for each year of practice in a rural or under-serviced area for a minimum of 5 years; and
- support volunteer firefighters by providing a refundable tax credit of \$2,000 for volunteer firefighters and emergency service workers.

For Northern Canadians, the high cost of living is a barrier to prosperity. A Liberal government will immediately boost the maximum Northern Residents Deduction by almost \$1,000 and index it going forward.

In order to keep our rural and Northern communities strong and vibrant, we must address the challenges facing the industries that are their economic foundations: forestry, fishing and farming.

The forestry sector is experiencing some major challenges. That's why we will convene a National Forestry Summit with industry, unions, communities, Aboriginal Canadians and other governments to develop a National Forestry Strategy.

Liberals will invest \$250 million to fight the spread of the Mountain Pine Beetle.

A new and serious threat to Canadian forestry is the mountain pine beetle – an example of how climate change will impact Canada's economy. The pine beetle has ravaged forests in British Columbia and has crossed into Alberta, threatening jobs and raising the fire risk in rural communities. Liberals will be there to help affected Canadians, with \$250 million in new funding to fight the spread of the pine beetle.

We will also help protect and support Canada's fishing industries. We will invest to preserve our fishing stocks and fairly allocate viable fisheries, increasing funding for science, surveillance, conservation and protection. We will also invest to reduce fishing efforts and allow those who want to end their fishing career to do so with dignity by offering to retire core commercial harvesting licenses in areas severely affected by declining stocks. We will also partner with the provinces to fund an early retirement program for displaced crewmembers and plant workers.

We will establish the Green Fisheries and the Transport Fund, which will provide over \$250 million for investments to reduce fuel consumption.

We will promote cod and salmon stock recovery by reinvesting in habitat conservation and working to establish the world's first international protected area to protect the vital cod nursery from foreign over-fishing on the Tail of the Grand Banks. We will help fishers improve their assets, by improving access to capital for improvements to fishing vessels and equipment through the establishment of the Green Fisheries and Transport Fund. The Fund will provide over \$250 million in rebates and incentives for investments in technologies that reduce fuel consumption, such as anti-idling power devices for the trucking industry and on-shore power facilities for the fisheries industry.

We will convene a National Fisheries Summit, bringing together all the key stakeholders and orders of government to address the economic and sustainability

challenges facing the industry. And we will be mindful of the importance of the fisheries industry across the whole country by investing \$100 million (including \$25 million in Canada's North) in the improvement of small craft harbours, the home base of Canada's commercial fishing industry.

To build a strong future for our agriculture sector, we will introduce a new Regional Flexibility Fund. The agricultural sector faces challenges that are not the same across Canada. A Liberal government will work in partnership with farmers and farm organizations to fund the development of regional specific solutions such as the Ontario Risk Management Program. Adaptation to climate change will also present a challenge for farmers and the Regional Flexibility Fund could help regions develop improvements to crop insurance and environment programs.

To build a strong future for our agriculture sector, we will introduce a new regional flexibility fund.

We will restore a strong, democratic Wheat Board, reversing the damage done by the Conservatives and ensuring that farmers are the ones who direct reforms to the board, through a fair and transparent process. We will defend supply management in negotiations at the World Trade Organization.

We will strengthen business risk management programs, using input from farm organizations to make sure those programs meet the needs of all producers in all regions. We will streamline AgriStability to ensure a simpler application process and easier accessibility. And we will reaffirm the federal government's commitment to provide compensation for losses from unforeseen natural disasters. We will also support the promotion of local farmers' markets, and the branding of Canadian foods. The more that Canadians buy local farm products, the less distance our food has to travel – this is good for farmers and the environment.

To ensure accuracy and fairness in the calculation of freight rates, a Liberal government will quickly launch a full railway costing review. In addition, a Liberal government will acknowledge the commercial, community and environmental value of short-line railway operations, which need to be encouraged as an infrastructure priority. A Liberal government will implement a moratorium on further branch-line abandonment proceedings to allow the new government to assess the appropriateness of the current branch-line configuration.

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Risks to farming operations caused by worsening climate change are increasing, including threats to crop production and diminishing fresh water supplies. A new Liberal government will, as part of our \$400-million Water Fund described in more detail later in this platform, strongly support the on-farm and community-based fresh water development programs of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA).

Finally, we will give farmers the tools they need to become more energy efficient and less reliant on fossil fuels. Farms that invest in green technologies such as anaerobic digesters or biomass production will benefit from an accelerated capital cost allowance. A Liberal government will also create a \$250-million Green Farms Fund to provide rebates that will reduce the up-front cost of these

We will create a \$250-million Green Farms Fund to help invest in green technology and research.

technologies and invest in research. This is on top of the Emissions Reduction Credit, part of the Liberal green shift plan, which will provide \$400 million over four years for refundable tax credits to industries such as farming that are achieving real, verified reductions in their emissions.

5. Jobs Tomorrow: Investment in Research & Development

A Liberal government will increase the budgets of the three granting councils by 34 percent.

A Liberal government will increase support for the indirect costs of university-based research to \$500 million a year, which at full implementation will represent a more than 50 percent increase over current levels.

For researchers and graduate students, a Liberal government will increase the budgets of the three granting councils by 34 percent over four years. Support for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) will both increase to \$1.275 billion a year from the current levels of \$960 million. Funding for the Social Sciences and Humanities Council (SSHRC) will be increased to \$450 million a year from the current level of \$320 million.

We will also create an Interdisciplinary Sustainability Fund of \$100 million. This Fund will be available to scientists, researchers and graduate students for projects that reach beyond the barriers of their discipline. Interdisciplinary research is the way of the future. It is how we will address complex scientific challenges – like adaptation to the climate change crisis – that affect our economy and our society.

We will make the SR&ED tax credit refundable to spur innovation and create jobs for Canadians.

A Liberal government will also extend the tax credit for research and development through the Scientific Research and Experimental Development Tax (SR&ED) Program, so that 25 percent of SR&ED tax credits received will be refundable. This means that all innovative companies in Canada will be rewarded, not just those that are already making a profit and paying taxes in the short term.

Building upon our initial proposal to retain income trusts as a high-yield investment option so that Canadians have a diversity of investment vehicles, while ensuring tax neutrality between corporations and income trusts, a Liberal government will repeal the punitive 31.5 percent tax on income trusts and replace it with a 10 percent tax that is refundable for Canadian residents.

6. Jobs Tomorrow: Providing Access to Post-Secondary Education

The opportunity for every Canadian to attend college or university, or to complete a skilled trade apprenticeship, is central to the future economic success of Canada. To succeed in the global economy, replace retiring baby-boomers in existing jobs and fill new jobs created by an innovative, dynamic and sustainable economy, we need to make quality, affordable post-secondary education available to more Canadians.

The only new assistance full-time students have received under the Conservative government is a tax credit for textbooks worth less than \$10 per month. As well, a student must earn almost \$20,000 a year to benefit fully from existing education tax credits. That's little help to most students, who earn an average of just \$5,000.

A Liberal government will help make post-secondary education accessible to every Canadian by boosting and simplifying existing support for students, and offering more tax credits and student loans to apprentices.

Simplifying Tax Support for Students

Currently, our tax system does not work effectively and efficiently for students. Students are not able to qualify for most available tax credits because they typically do not earn sufficient income. For those who benefit from the credits, the refund arrives in a lump sum at the end of the school year rather than during the school year when students need the money most.

To ensure that students benefit from support when they need it, the existing tuition and education tax credits for full-time post-secondary students will be replaced with an Education Grant payable to each student every three months – at the same time as the GST rebate is paid to most students.

When combined with the GST rebate received by most students, this new grant will be worth \$1,000 per full-time undergraduate, postgraduate or college student per year. In addition to this, our plan offers an additional a tax credit worth \$250 for students who work and are therefore able to benefit from the green shift's refundable employment credit even if they do not earn sufficient income to pay federal income taxes.

An Improved Approach to Student Aid

A Liberal government will create a 20-year education endowment fund worth \$25 billion. By creating a fund such as this, the federal government will be able to turn a relatively small investment – which would allow for the borrowing of the initial funds needed to start the endowment – into a significant, long-term investment in students. Over the next four years and in cooperation with the provinces, this fund will allow the government at full implementation to provide 200,000 needs-based bursaries of up to \$3,500 per year and 100,000 access bursaries of up to \$4,000 per year. Needs-based bursaries will be used to ensure that the barrier of cost will be lowered for students who need financial support to pursue their post-secondary education. Access grants will be used to provide financial assistance to help individuals who are members of groups that are traditionally under-represented in post-secondary education.

Quebec has a long and unique history of a generous and progressive approach to student support. In recognition and support of this approach, a Liberal government will work with the provincial government to meet the shared goal of increasing access and affordability for post-secondary education while providing Quebec with the

A Liberal government will simplify the maze of tax credits for students by replacing them with a Education Grant that will be delivered to all students when they need it most.

option of receiving compensation over a similar 20-year period to invest in its own post-secondary student funding priorities instead of joining any new arrangement.

Reforming Student Loans

We will make all students eligible for guaranteed student loans of \$5,000, regardless of parental income.

At present, many middle-income families see their children denied student loans based on existing rules about parental income and assumed levels of parental support. These rules do not match the reality of many of today's middle-income families, who cannot afford to finance their child's education. A Liberal government will make all students eligible for guaranteed student loans of \$5,000, regardless of parental income.

In addition to this commitment to a guaranteed student loan for all students, we will also work with our provincial partners to put an end to high interest rates for students by providing all students with a new lower lending rate of only a half a percent above the prime rate – the rate that banks give to their best and most credit-worthy customers. We will also work with the provinces to design new student loan programs that will increase access for under-represented groups such as Aboriginal Canadians. Finally, we will extend the payment grace period for students immediately after graduation from 6 months to 2 years and make this grace period interest-free. We will also extend the time period that individuals have to repay their student loans.

Extending Support to Apprentices and Summer Students

A Liberal government will make available to all full-time apprentices the existing \$400-a-month education tax credit.

Canada faces a shortage of skilled trades-people as existing workers retire. To support apprentices, a Liberal government will make available to all full-time apprentices the existing \$400-a-month education tax credit. Apprentices will also be eligible for the guaranteed \$5,000 student loan.

In addition to these measures, a Liberal government will restore the \$44 million in funding to the Student Summer Jobs Program cut by the Conservatives.

7. Supporting Canadian Culture

A Liberal government will reverse recent cuts to arts and cultural programs.

Canada's diverse arts and cultural community plays a vital role in our national identity. Cultural activity fosters vibrant, liveable cities and communities, and supports innovation, helps us understand our past and imagine our future, and stimulates our economy.

Government needs to do a better job of supporting and promoting Canadian books, music and other forms of creativity. Unfortunately, we have a Conservative government that fails to see the value of arts and culture in fostering the richness of our country.

The Harper Conservatives gutted the Public Diplomacy Program, which allows our diplomats overseas to use Canadian artists and cultural products to gain access to and influence decision makers. They cut funding to community museums, and have provided no support for Canadian television, our growing film industry or



“While the Conservatives believe that Canadian filmmakers should be censored, we Liberals believe that Canadian filmmakers should be given more tools to help them succeed.”

cultural organizations. Until the Liberal caucus exposed them, the Conservatives were trying to give their Minister the power to censor filmmakers with a few lines buried in a 500-page tax bill. They then slashed at least \$44.5 million from critical cultural support programs. A Liberal government will reverse these recent cuts and reinvest the funding cut from the Public Diplomacy Program in 2006.

We will increase the Canadian Film and Video Production Tax Credit to 30 percent.

Liberals believe that Canadian filmmakers should be given more tools to help them succeed. That is why we will increase the Canadian Film and Video Production Tax Credit to 30 percent. Not only will this help our filmmakers produce more great films, but it will also help create more high-quality jobs in an industry that already employs over 125,000 people. This represents a commitment of over \$160 million to our filmmakers.

A Liberal government will support our cultural industries, increasing Canada's competitiveness and quality of life, inviting leading cultural figures to showcase Canada to the world, celebrating and encouraging our wonderful diversity.

A Liberal government will double the annual funding to the Canada Council for the Arts.

That support begins at the institutional level. Over the next four years, we will double funding to the Canada Council for the Arts, bringing its annual budget to over \$360 million. This will enable the Canada Council to make significant investments in Canada's artists, creators, and arts institutions. With this investment, we are giving Canadian artists the tools they need to create exciting, vibrant products for all Canadians.

In addition to restoring the cuts made by the Conservatives, we will further increase funding for international arts promotion programming by \$15 million over three years to help bring Canada to the world.

We will increase support for Canada's museums, investing \$16 million in the Museum Assistance Program, to help safeguard our precious cultural heritage.

We will support Canadian content, directing the CRTC to continue its requirement of Canadian production and content as a condition of broadcast licensing.

A Liberal government will provide income-averaging for artists, an important tool for helping this country's writers, artists and musicians continue to excel.

Canada has had considerable success in developing a home-grown new or interactive media sector that produces leading edge educational and entertainment projects enjoyed by audiences here at home and around the world. To build on this success and create new, high-skilled jobs in this rapidly growing industry, a new Liberal government will develop and launch a Canadian Digital Media Strategy. The Strategy will focus the government's efforts to ensure that Canadian creators are able to take a leading role in an industry expected to be worth \$65 billion globally by 2010.

Support for Canada's arts and culture must also extend to support for artists themselves. That is why a Liberal government will provide income averaging for artists drawing on the inspiration of Quebec's income-averaging provisions. This will ensure that the tax system will better reflect the peaks and valleys of the artistic work cycle. This is an important tool for helping this country's writers, artists and musicians continue to excel.